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MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE ACTION PLAN ON DRUG ABUSE CONTROL

Strengthening system-wide cooperation and coordination in drug control

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present report describes the progress made in accordance with resolution 6 (XXXVII), adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-seventh session, by which the Executive Director is requested to analyse ways and means of strengthening system-wide cooperation in the field of drug control. The report provides a definition of what effective coordination entails, assesses progress made thus far and, most importantly, identifies specific opportunities for partnership between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and other United Nations entities. It concludes by providing recommendations on how to enhance system-wide coordination.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1-10	3
I.	ANALYSIS OF UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION	11-21	4
	A. Role of intergovernmental bodies and of Governments at the national level	11-13	4
	B. Role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme	14-16	5
	C. Relationship between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and United Nations partners	17-21	5
II.	COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AT COUNTRY OR INTER-COUNTRY LEVEL	22-36	7
	A. United Nations Development Programme	23-26	7
	B. World Health Organization	27-29	8
	C. United Nations Children's Fund	30-31	8
	D. World Bank	32-33	9
	E. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	34	9
	F. International Labour Organization	35	10
	G. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	36	10
III.	RECOMMENDATIONS	37	10
	A. Roles of United Nations system partners	37	10
	B. Role of the international financial institutions	38	11
	C. Inter-agency mechanisms	39-41	11

INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, by its resolution 6 (XXXVII), requested the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to analyse further ways and means of strengthening system-wide cooperation and coordination in the light of existing mandates, including activities undertaken by the multilateral development institutions, in order to maximize the impact of drug control activities within the system. In particular, he was requested to assess the potential for incorporating drug control aspects and activities into relevant projects and programmes undertaken by other United Nations entities and by the multilateral development institutions, and to draw up guidelines to enable UNDCP to fulfil its catalytic role.

2. The Executive Director was also requested to undertake the analysis in the light of the conclusions agreed by the Economic and Social Council at the coordination segment of its substantive session in July 1994.

3. The Secretary-General had submitted a report on the status of cooperation in drug abuse control within the United Nations system (E/1994/58) to that session. The Council supported the conclusions and recommendations contained therein and stated that they should be fully explored by the concerned parties on a priority basis.

4. The Executive Director was authorized, by resolution 6 (XXXVII), to engage consultants with relevant expertise to carry out the requested analysis. Those consultants met with senior staff of UNDCP both at headquarters in Vienna and at the regional and country levels. They also had discussions at the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as well as the regional and country field offices of agencies and entities located in five countries and at five field offices of UNDCP covering 37 countries.

5. In line with their terms of reference, the consultants carried out an analysis of the current status of system-wide coordination and cooperation, noting areas of weaknesses and strengths. While the consultants extensively examined UNDCP itself, it was felt that additional attention could well be directed at the question of how, specifically, to build partnerships among United Nations entities. In their analysis, the consultants recommended that UNDCP strengthen system-wide cooperation and coordination by (a) strengthening its own capacity to provide intellectual leadership, and (b) promoting and developing a genuine partnership with its main partners, in view of each entity's technical expertise. The partnership of UNDCP with other entities of the United Nations system is elaborated on in the present document in accordance with the recommendations made by the consultants.

6. United Nations activities can be coordinated only to the extent that Governments arrive at a clear understanding of how their national or regional concerns can be addressed by system-wide action. A rational division of labour, based on the comparative strengths of relevant United Nations entities, must be identified. Without this policy coordination at the national level, there is little chance that United Nations entities will be able to successfully merge their efforts into a coherent, coordinated programme.

In short, operational coordination at the system level depends first and foremost on policy coordination at the national level.

7. Similarly, United Nations entities can integrate their efforts into a cohesive programme only if their governing bodies provide policy directives to that end. It is often the case that explicit calls for drug control coordination voiced in drug control forums become muted in other forums where drug control is not the major item on the agenda, even though the subject at hand may be closely related to it and many of the Governments represented are the same. Consistency in this regard is a prerequisite for progress.

8. Coordination of United Nations operational activities in drug control involves the expertise and financial resources of various organizations and a focus on common goals. Coordination must take place at two levels: policy development at headquarters and policy implementation in the field. The aim is to promote mutually supportive system-wide programmes.

9. Coordination of United Nations activities must be pursued with an understanding of its possibilities and limitations, and with due regard to costs and benefits; experience has shown that coordination activities can absorb considerable staff time and resources. It is necessary to emphasize that coordination must not be seen as an end in itself. It must be pursued where it will enhance the total impact of the system's programmes and activities.

10. The General Assembly, by resolution S-17/2, annex, adopted a Global Programme of Action on narcotic drugs and called upon Member States to take all necessary steps to promote and implement the recommendations contained therein (para. 96). The Assembly called upon States to implement certain measures including the provision, both on a short- and long-term basis, of extra-budgetary support (resolution S-17/2, annex, paras. 91-93). In this regard, the Assembly, by resolution 48/112, section V, urged all Governments to provide the fullest possible financial and political support. It also requested that States represented in the governing bodies of the programmes and agencies concerned should ensure that their agendas consistently reflect and accord adequate priority to drug control activities (resolution 48/112, para. 7). The measures called for include assessing the activities taken to comply with the action plan; drawing up master plans; and establishing national coordination committees and monitoring systems (E/1993/29/Rev.1, paras. 119, 122 and 134).

I. ANALYSIS OF UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION

A. Role of intergovernmental bodies and of Governments at the national level

11. In their analysis, the consultants observe that Member States have expressed commitment and have called on each other to give the highest possible priority and the fullest possible financial and political support in the international fight against drug abuse but that, despite this, there has been a lack of consistency in the positions of Member States in the various bodies of the United Nations system. This inconsistency is reflected in the fact that, with the possible exception of two or three governing bodies, many United Nations entities have not (a) reviewed the need for specific mandates in drug control (despite the goals set out in the Global Programme of Action and subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly); or (b) given priority to programmes relating to the illicit drug problem.

12. At the national level as well, few Governments facing serious drug-related problems have as yet elaborated comprehensive response strategies or measures. Fewer have elaborated master plans or established effective national coordinating and monitoring mechanisms, as urged by the General Assembly. In their absence, there is a weak basis on which system entities can develop coordinated

strategies at field level, for such strategies should ideally correspond to national priorities. The absence of country-level drug control strategies tends to encourage projects and initiatives driven by fund availability rather than comprehensive programmes aimed at sustainable impact.

13. In situations where the development of a country has been strongly influenced by drug-related factors, there is a need for balanced and phased approaches that are linked to the promotion of economic development and the establishment of effective crime control systems. Pragmatism is required when calling for enhanced national drug control efforts and resources when other more pressing problems deserve priority attention. In such scenarios, the need for coordination is not less, but even greater, for drug control and development planning can, when undertaken together, result in savings and economies of scale that contribute to the achievement of both drug control and development objectives. In some countries and regions, the key is to ensure that drug control interventions are integrated into broader development strategies.

B. Role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

14. UNDCP was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/179 of 21 December 1990 as the single body responsible for concerted international action for drug abuse control. In this regard, it, provides, inter-alia, advice to Member States on the implementation of international drug control treaties and promotes effective implementation and adherence to them; funds, coordinates and implements drug control programmes at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, aimed at reducing illicit cultivation, production, traffic and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; improves the effectiveness of control over them; and serves as the repository of information on drug-related matters.

15. Although the funds available for drug control, while limited, are comparable to those available for some other sectors, they pale in contrast to the volume of bilateral funds devoted to drug control. The international character and political neutrality of UNDCP afford it a potentially important and influential role as an honest broker in bridging and otherwise facilitating cooperation between funding sources and recipient countries. A further advantage lies in the accumulated worldwide institutional knowledge and experience that UNDCP can bring to bear on its programmes of assistance.

16. The strength of UNDCP also lies in its ability to promote collaboration among countries in tackling a problem that transcends national boundaries and in helping Governments to adopt multidisciplinary approaches.

C. Relationship between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and United Nations system partners

17. With regard to UNDCP coordination efforts with other United Nations partners, there is first of all a need to distinguish between cooperation and coordination. Cooperation implies joint undertakings from situation analyses, needs assessment, planning, implementation, and progress review and evaluation stages. Examples are the social and economic impact studies carried out by UNDP/UNDCP or UNDCP/World Bank, the first one of which was made for Pakistan and more are planned for South-West and South-East Asia as well as for selected Andean countries. Such studies will allow Governments to improve the link between drug control efforts and developmental concerns and also to assist United Nations partners in shaping their development-related activities with greater recognition of the need for drug control interventions.

18. As a special cooperation modality, the specialized agencies of the United Nations would implement UNDCP funded projects for the Programme. Such arrangements would need to be managed, rather than

coordinated, and thus represent further examples of cooperation. From the Subcommittee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, FAO, UNESCO and WHO (Programme on Substance Abuse) are recognized as appropriate implementation agencies and specialized partners of the Programme; the Office for Project Services of the United Nations is particularly well equipped in the implementation-management services function and handles a sizeable portion of the UNDCP programme, mainly in the area of alternative development.

19. Coordination implies maximizing the communication needed to address priorities together, create synergies, ensure complementarity, and prevent overlap and duplication of efforts. Insofar as the international drug control issue is concerned, UNDCP is mandated to play the central coordinating role. United Nations agencies and regional commissions, as well as such other partners as non-governmental organizations, are involved in drug control and prevention activities. UNDCP can help to ensure that multiple source and modality assistance is used to pursue priority objectives, employ proven methodologies and complement each other to minimize overlap and achieve economies of scale. Also, through assistance for situation analyses, master plan preparation and institutional capacity building, UNDCP can help to strengthen, both directly and indirectly, government internal coordination capabilities. In doing so, it can reinforce the key role of Governments in drug control and prevention and the coordination of external assistance towards nationally agreed policies, priorities and operational approaches.

20. As a catalyst, UNDCP facilitates intergovernmental action and integrates the action of Governments in the implementation of subregional strategies. With regard to subregional activities, UNDCP serves as a conduit of information and strategy development as neighbouring countries recognize and act on the drug-related problems they share. Activities in alternative development should hinge on the willingness of Governments and multilateral institutions to take over the reins of rural development - in particular the sizeable capital investments needed for economic and human development - as UNDCP focuses on specific drug-related programme objectives. UNDCP, in this light, can provide assistance and expertise for interventions that are ultimately pursued and expanded by the partners most able to do so.

21. Both for cooperation and coordination, the ready and wide availability of quality information and analysis thereof are essential. Equally important are thematic evaluation summaries, technical papers on methodology etc. Illicit drug data and information, technology and promising experiences need to be disseminated to ensure common levels of awareness among partners. There is still a discernible deficit in this regard and, thus, information-gathering and analysis of drug-related data need to be better organized and managed throughout the system. UNDCP has a central role in producing, compiling, sorting and extensively disseminating and sharing information and technology. Means and vehicles to this effect are:

(a) CND reports, strategy documents and discussion papers;

(b) Popularized versions thereof for specific target group of partners;

(c) Production and distribution of quantitative and qualitative drug knowledge through the mechanism of the Administrative Committee on Coordination in order to promote strategic dialogue on the basis of common levels of understanding and awareness;

(d) Frequent dissemination between Subcommittee meetings of such documents as programme progress reports, situation assessments and updates, and country drug abuse profiles to the specialized agencies, relevant non-governmental organizations etc. (a selective approach should be considered for economic reasons);

(e) Regular dissemination of technical papers, findings and recommendations of thematic evaluations, empirical studies on impact and effectiveness of technical cooperation efforts, government measures etc;

(f) Regional thematic, technical expert forums (for example the Afghanistan Expert Forum in September 1992, the Bogotá Poppy Consultation in May 1993 and the Demand Reduction Expert Fora, the outcome of which needs to be systematically shared beyond the narrow circle of attendance) together with follow-up action and suggestions on how to operationalize these in partnership;

(g) Government master plans and UNDCP operational and strategy documents such as central and eastern Europe strategic country profiles, country and regional programme frameworks; in some instances, such bodies as UNDP would be invited to contribute to preparing and updating some of these documents. This would involve, inter alia, the sharing of subregional memoranda of understanding and related action and cooperation agendas with UNDP resident representatives, United Nations partners and regional offices, so as to identify projects and programme components within their areas of competence in support of subregional cooperation. Furthermore, UNDCP can actively help to realize the working agreement with UNDP, since UNDP is a central United Nations funding agency for technical assistance; because of the designation of resident representatives as resident coordinators, UNDP serves as the focal point and facilitator of coordination in development cooperation, to which function the UNDCP drug control coordination role has to be attuned.

II. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AT COUNTRY OR INTER-COUNTRY LEVEL

22. As regards opportunities for cooperation with United Nations partners, UNDCP ties with UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, WHO and the World Bank stand out: these organizations have extensive field office networks, have their own funding base and are involved in policy dialogue, development cooperation and/or essential services delivery that are of importance for carrying out the mandate of UNDCP.

A. United Nations Development Programme

23. The discernable strengths of UNDP with regard to system-wide cooperation are its roles as:

(a) Central technical assistance funding agency of the United Nations system with its own five-year cooperation programmes and a network of field offices involving over 120 countries;

(b) Sponsor of round-table meetings for the least developed countries, division of labour with the World Bank, which organizes consultative group meetings;

(c) Resident coordinator for a multidisciplinary United Nations system approach to policy dialogue programming and operational cooperation.

24. In this connection, UNDCP input to (a) United Nations Country Strategy Notes and (b) UNDP country programmes are of particular relevance to address drug control and prevention as parts of institution building, rural development, and health and education development. Country directors are expected to systematically involve themselves in Country Strategy Notes as well as country programme preparation and also screen existing country programme documents for opportunities to incorporate into them drug control strategies. Similarly, UNDCP plans to do the same for perhaps up to 20 countries where, though the Programme may not have a direct field presence, drug control merits priority attention. This goal could be met through the active engagement of the resident representatives, in their dual capacity as UNDCP representative, with appropriate support from UNDCP headquarters.

25. Given the thematic focus of UNDP on human development and poverty alleviation, one area of common interest is AIDS/HIV prevention and community participation. Standing working groups are often organized by resident coordinators on this subject in which UNDCP field representatives can contribute as well. Ethnic minority demarginalization is another issue of common concern to UNDCP field staff. Collaboration in this regard would include effective cross-sectoral data collection, and the analysis and formulation of integrated programme approaches. Similarly, in those priority drug control countries where UNDCP is not directly represented, the Programme needs to ensure that the resident representative is appropriately briefed to permit that drug control concerns are taken into account.

26. Enhanced UNDP-UNDCP synergy and resource pooling in the working arrangement context can be achieved through dialogue between UNDCP and UNDP, inter alia, on the basis of the discussion paper on drugs and development; UNDCP participation in United Nations system field-team formation through exercises at the ILO Training Centre; participation of senior UNDCP officials, as already noted, in UNDP global, regional and subregional meetings that bring together resident representatives from neighbouring countries; and participation of UNDP resident representatives/coordinators in UNDCP training seminars.

B. World Health Organization

27. The role of WHO in substance abuse control opens up many opportunities for cooperation with UNDCP. To this effect, WHO has created the Programme on Substance Abuse, which has become a major interlocutor of UNDCP with regard to strategic and operational concerns in the fields of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. Its primary areas of work, insofar as the interests of UNDCP are concerned, are, inter alia, basic health education, epidemiological data collection, health statistics capacity development and effective distribution of essential medicines, including quality control and promotion of proper medical use. The fact that WHO nominates candidates for election to the International Narcotics Control Board is testimony to the contribution that WHO makes in global drug policy. Furthermore, in almost every developing country, WHO has a field office that is under the substantive oversight of its regional offices.

28. WHO and UNDP support national AIDS/HIV committees that focus on the issue of intravenous drug users, in the context of HIV proliferation. WHO, through its field offices and regional meetings of health ministers, usually enjoys effective and direct access to health ministries and thus can facilitate government consideration of and provide support to UNDCP prevention, treatment and rehabilitation concerns.

29. UNDCP field office directors plan to review existing biennial WHO country plans, as well as to offer their advice in connection with new biennial draft plans of WHO budgets; this would be aimed at having common substance abuse, treatment, prevention and regulatory concerns incorporated into such plans.

C. United Nations Children's Fund

30. UNICEF works on the basis of five-year plans of operations, synchronized increasingly through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. Many children in Andean, Caribbean, African (Liberia, Kenya, Nigeria) and other regions are clearly vulnerable to drug abuse and thus a logical target group for prevention treatment and rehabilitation. UNICEF has pioneered exemplary approaches in informal education, preventive health and preparation of relevant didactic and information tools, notably the widely circulated Facts for Life publications, which are being periodically updated and published in several languages. In this context, prospective UNDCP-UNICEF cooperation opportunities could be pursued as outlined below.

31. UNDCP-UNICEF cooperation would foresee UNDCP inputs to programmes for children in especially difficult circumstances, i.e. drug rehabilitation and prevention communication components for street and other vulnerable young age groups (up to 14). It would also involve:

(a) UNDCP reviewing existing UNICEF plans of operations and suggesting inputs to new plans at the data collection and drafting stages;

(b) Drawing on UNICEF public information and social advocacy skills in the preparation and dissemination of drug awareness creation and prevention campaigns;

(c) Incorporating drug prevention education components into Facts for Life publications;

(d) Tapping UNICEF contacts to non-governmental organizations, social welfare, health and education ministries and also to community organizations that are of interest to UNDCP as target groups for the propagation of drug prevention and awareness messages.

D. World Bank

32. The World Bank prepares periodic country economic memoranda as well as sectoral reports on agriculture, education and health. Also, it organizes consultative group meetings for many countries, which facilitate aid policy coordination and which allow discussion on illicit drug-related problems in the context of external cooperation. The World Bank has already agreed (IBRD/UNDP/UNDCP meeting at Vienna in September 1994) to assist UNDCP in carrying out and subsequently making use of country-level social and economic impact studies of illicit drug industries. Relevant field offices require guidance and briefing on how to handle such cooperation efforts locally, drawing on the Pakistan experience.

33. The following issues should be pursued in this light, primarily at the field level (supported by dialogue between headquarters):

(a) UNDCP input into country economic memoranda, in countries facing serious drug-related problems;

(b) UNDCP participation in consultative group meetings, as in the case of Bolivia and Pakistan, which offer examples in which illicit drug problems have been focused on during high-level development donor and foreign-aid coordination forums;

(c) UNDCP drug-relevant advice and input into World Bank sectoral loan programmes on health, education, judiciary capacity building (Argentina) and rural development. In the latter case, UNDCP would aim to have illicit crop prevention and reduction concerns incorporated into the sectoral or area development loans of the World Bank rather than to see it as a follow-up financier promoting alternative development projects of UNDCP in which the Bank was not involved at the planning stages;

E. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

34. UNESCO, despite its relatively scarce field presence, works with many countries through its national UNESCO commissions. Government officials and experts advise education authorities on policies and thematic priorities, i.e. education sector reform and informal education. These individuals could represent prospective partners for the following:

(a) Development of modular drug-related curricula components which national authorities would adopt and incorporate as part of their ongoing curriculum updating renewal exercise (for primary and secondary education, teacher training and education radio programmes);

(b) Drug awareness and prevention initiatives by teachers and teacher-parent associations.

F. International Labour Organization

35. ILO is one of the closest United Nations partners of UNDCP. The goal of eliminating illicit drugs and other relevant substances from the workplace and worker education programmes is one shared by both ILO and UNDCP. ILO is an implementing agency for UNDCP of renowned quality in the areas of drugs in the workplace and family and community education through worker education.

G. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

36. UNHCR provides essential survival means and resettlement assistance to tens of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. It has its own field network to deliver services and get information across to refugee communities. The dramatic disruption of economic and social life that refugees and displaced persons face creates a vulnerability vis-à-vis the illicit drug lure, as evidenced in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Liberia, Pakistan and Viet Nam as well as in Central America. Therefore, drug preventive education and awareness creation should become part of UNHCR services with the assistance of UNDCP and WHO in the preparation of prevention brochures, delivery of treatment and rehabilitation programmes for longer term refugees. To start with, strategic and technical dialogues should be held between the headquarters of UNDCP and UNHCR to agree on the need, content and modality of interventions.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Roles of United Nations system partners

37. The relevant agencies and entities of the United Nations system have opportunities:

(a) To review their current strategies - as reflected in the annexes to document E/CN.7/1994/CRP.6 on the system-wide action plan on drug abuse control - ensuring that these reflect the consolidated strategies of all relevant sectors and subsectors of their organizations that relate to the drug issue. They should furthermore link them as appropriate to the specific provisions of the Global Programme of Action, as a basis for elaborating common system-wide goals and strategies, as well as substantive frameworks for their bilateral collaboration with UNDCP;

(b) To transmit appropriate guidelines to their field representatives, encouraging them to pursue potential areas of collaboration in their specific country circumstances. They should in particular be encouraged:

(i) To review ongoing and pipeline programmes with their UNDCP counterparts to identify suitable entry points and thence to incorporate drug components in those programmes;

(ii) To establish, as appropriate, informal working groups of the agencies most directly concerned to collaborate with UNDCP in data gathering, research, and the elaboration of country profiles and situational analyses; to make an inventory of ongoing activities in drug-related fields; and to elaborate a country-specific framework for programmes and activities;

(d) To the greatest extent possible, allocate the necessary staff and related resources to support these programmes.

B. Role of the international financial institutions

38. Considering that the financial institutions, in particular the World Bank, have significant capacities and expertise to assess the importance, globally and in specific country situations, of the drug problem, and have considerable influence on recipient Governments and on other development partners, UNDCP should:

(a) Initiate and, as appropriate, broaden its collaboration with the financial institutes in undertaking socio-economic impact studies;

(b) Encourage the institutions to monitor all available data on the impact of illicit drug trafficking;

(c) Encourage the World Bank to place the drug issue on the agenda of consultative group meetings in the relevant countries, to raise it in other development forums, to sensitize Governments to it and to reflect it in its policy framework papers;

(d) Encourage IMF, in addition to advising Governments on drug-related aspects of banking legislation and monetary matters, to undertake research on major financial flows from illegal activities including drug trafficking and money-laundering, and to take full account of the impact of the drug industry in relevant structural adjustment programmes.

C. Inter-agency mechanisms

39. The memoranda of understanding that UNDCP has signed with some of its key partners are useful in clarifying mandates and roles. What is missing is the elaboration of a meaningful substantive framework within which collaboration could be pursued. In this regard, the Administrative Committee on Coordination, particularly its Subcommittee on Drug Abuse Control, offers opportunities for future progress. The Subcommittee may also provide a forum in which the system-wide action plan for drug abuse control can develop into a more effective planning tool.

40. The recent accession of UNDCP to the Joint Consultative Group on Policy as an observer provides another useful forum in which to strengthen cooperation and to more effectively link drug control and development concerns that need to be addressed by United Nations system partners.

41. The functioning of the ACC Subcommittee on Drug Abuse Control as a mechanism for promoting inter-agency collaboration and coordination both at the overall policy and operational levels should be enhanced. This will, in the first instance, require that some of the prerequisites for enhanced system-wide collaboration, outlined above, are met. The consultants entrusted with the analysis for this report have concluded that the Subcommittee should:

(a) Elaborate a two-year rolling workplan, which could be reviewed and updated at each of its annual sessions;

(b) Adopt shorter and more focused agendas with a clear understanding of the purpose and results expected from each item on the agenda; items could include the elaboration of system-wide goals and strategies, the elaboration of common terminology, overall frameworks for common research and data collection exercises, as well as common training programmes and the development of training modules that could be integrated into individual agency and collective training programmes;

(c) Ensure the preparation of concise discussion papers, not only by its secretariat but also by members, individually and collectively, that specifically identify the main issues for discussions and, as appropriate, action;

(d) Place emphasis on the resort to informal working groups consisting of members with the potential to contribute.